



State of Louisiana

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For Immediate Release
February 2, 2004

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Environmental News

DEQ'S DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM Moves on to Acadia Parish

(Baton Rouge) -- The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Drinking Water Protection Program will continue its successful campaign message of "Protect Drinking Water One Drop At A Time." Acadia Parish was recently selected as the next parish for the comprehensive campaign. The program is aimed at increasing public awareness, informing the public of the steps each person can take to protect the integrity of their drinking water sources and elevating the level of participation in the effort.

Beginning Feb. 4 through March 31, during the initial phase of the Drinking Water Protection campaign, DEQ's Drinking Water Protection Team will visit public and private schools in Acadia parish, to present environmental information to the students.

The campaign will officially kickoff with a community meeting, on Thursday, April 1 at 6:30 p.m. at the Rayne Civic Center. The campaign seeks to involve private citizens, community groups, water systems, businesses and industry in Acadia Parish. The meeting will address the goals and issues of the program. Because clean water is essential for good health, the team will share protection and conservation tips that residents can use in their homes.

"We would like this meeting to be a family affair. DEQ is encouraging all residents in Acadia parish and surrounding areas to join this effort to protect our environment. This is the kind of public education campaign that gives citizens control over the fate of their natural resources," stated Vince Sagnibene, Administrator of DEQ's Environmental Evaluation Division. "We should all take an active role in ensuring clean drinking water for the future. Participation is the key."

(more)

The Drinking Water Protection Program is a voluntary program designed to assist communities in protecting their drinking water sources. It is linked to the Louisiana Wellhead Protection Program, which DEQ has run for well over a decade. The Wellhead Protection Program has received numerous awards and certificates of recognition from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for excellence and efficiency. “Drinking Water Protection Area” signs will replace signs that read “Wellhead Protection Area,” along major roadways in Acadia Parish to remind people when a public drinking water supply well is nearby.

The pilot program kicked off last year in Avoyelles Parish and was well received by the community. The goal of the initiative is to expand to other parishes in Louisiana.

The team is seeking volunteers to serve on committees to work with the community in creating a sustainable drinking water protection program. For more information you may contact the DEQ Drinking Water Protection Team members Mary Gentry or Tiffani Cravens at (225) 219-3510 and visit the DEQ web page at <http://www.deq.state.la.us/evaluation/aeps/>.